

YALE UNIVERSITY
OSBORN BOTANICAL LABORATORY
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

June 6, 1947

Dr. R. A. Brink
Department of Genetics
College of Agriculture
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Dr. Brink:

I first want to reassure you wholeheartedly on the points raised in your letter regarding Lederberg's interests, personality, and cooperativeness.

As far as personality is concerned, I can foresee no serious difficulties. Lederberg is inherently very honest and straightforward, and is capable of being almost charming in his relations with others. Although he has antagonized some of those working in the laboratory, I feel that this has been due primarily to his single-minded concentration on science and the problem in hand, which has led to a somewhat thoughtless but only apparently inconsiderate behavior. Even at the worst, however, Lederberg's ability and enthusiasm, with his unquestioned personal and scientific sincerity and integrity, have made his colleagues and the faculty gladly overlook these lapses. Furthermore, I feel that he has matured considerably during the past year, and with this maturity his social sense has improved greatly. My frank opinion would be that neither this shortcoming nor the only other point against Lederberg, his race, should be taken as serious objections to his consideration for your position.

I am sending separately a copy of our paper on gene recombination in *E. coli* which is to appear in the June issue of the Journal of Bacteriology. Another paper on linkage relations in this organism is in preparation.

Further information regarding Lederberg's ability (and personality) you might want at the following:

Dr. C. B. van Niel
Hokins Marine Station
Pacific Grove, California

Dr. S. Bayne-Jones
Jane Coffin Childs Fund
Yale University, New Haven.

Dr. F. J. Ryan
Department of Zoology
Columbia University
New York, New York

Dr. T. M. Sonneborn
Department of Zoology
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana

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Regarding Lederberg's breadth of training, it is true that previous to his arrival at Yale a year and a half ago, his experience had been primarily with medicine. However, the contacts and courses here, with his breadth of interest in all fields of biology have broadened his outlook so that now I have not the slightest doubt of his ability and desire to cooperate fully in any research problems touching on genetics, whether from the microbiological, plant, animal, or human aspects.

Lederberg is definitely interested in the position at Wisconsin as I have outlined it to him. I feel that he would be an excellent choice for this opening, and that he would fit quite well into the Wisconsin group in the suggested capacity. Frankly, from my knowledge of the Wisconsin group and my understanding of the proposed development in the genetics of microorganisms, I can't see that either Wisconsin or Lederberg could do better.

Sincerely,



E. L. Tatum
Professor of Microbiology

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